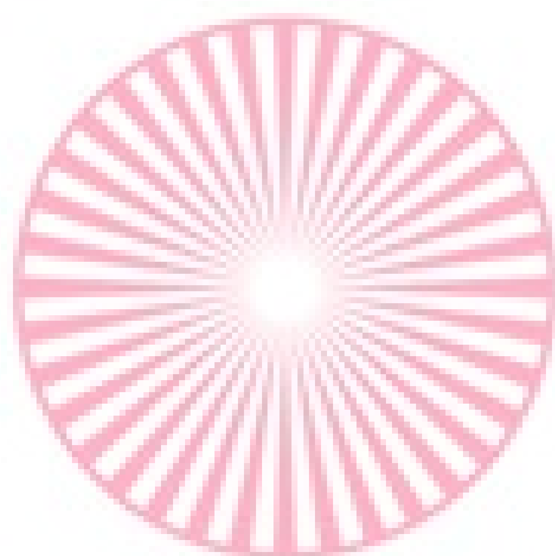


Raising Children



Author: Tahera Kassamali

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.The lessons are derived from Islamic sources originally written in Farsi on the subject

point

.Ten lessons on the Islamic way of raising children

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Lesson ١: Training of Children

point

The duty of every parent is to train the child in the right way. Training means teaching and guiding. Training also means producing required changes in a person. It is not enough for parents to cater for the physical needs of the child. They need to give the child an awareness and knowledge, help him gain good characteristics, and develop a virtuous personality. Such training of children has great benefits for the child as well as for the society in which he lives. Although many people have an influence on the .training of a child, the first and most important trainers are the parents

The guidance that a parent gives his child is vital for the progress of the child. Although the child may not appreciate it at the time, a loving parent knows that it is

incumbent upon him to make his child learn from his own knowledge and experience. This enables the child to avoid the mistakes the parent may have made, and benefit from his wisdom. Imam ‘Ali (a) wrote a will to his son Imam Hasan (a), advising him on how to live in this world. In

:the will he explains why he felt it necessary to advise his son

I found you a part of myself, rather I found you my whole, so much that if anything befell you, it was as though it befell me, and if death came to you, it was as though it came to me. Consequently your affairs meant to me as my own matters would mean . . . to me. So I have written this piece of advice as an instrument of help

Certainly, the heart of a young man is like uncultivated land. It accepts whatever is strewn on it. So I hastened to mould you properly before your heart hardens up and your mind gets occupied. So that you may be ready to accept through your intelligence, the results of experiences of others and be saved from going through .these experiences yourself

Nahjul Balagha, Letter ۳۱

Various Definitions of Training

point

۱. An action or a series of actions carried out on those who have not yet achieved full (physical and emotional) growth, to guide them in their thoughts and manners in order .to create a strong and balanced human being

۲. A process to help the growth of mental and spiritual powers of the human being to .go towards perfection

۳. An informed and thoughtful process which has the aim of guiding, changing, and .achieving the full potential of, another

۴. .Raising a human being to be useful and beneficial for society

۵. Islamic training can be defined as providing the necessary guidance and discipline through awakening potential

.virtues in the human being, and helping them develop

Conclusions from the above definitions

.Training is an informed and aware process .۱

.Training has an aim .۲

.Training has a plan and a strategy .۳

.It is a movement towards perfection .۴

.It brings about change for the better .۵

.It is a continuous process .۶

Parents train their children throughout the time they are with them. The correct form of training would take into consideration the above definitions of training. This has a significant effect on the children, and can help create a virtuous personality. Inherited .traits may be overcome or diminished through training

Parents as Trainers

.Parents have a two fold influence on the characters of their children

Through Inheritance: Many characteristics are passed on from the genes of the parents to the children. These genes could pass on characteristics of the grandparents and ancestors of the parents. Families share many qualities in common, and the role of inheritance cannot be overlooked. Physical and mental traits are passed on. The physical appearance of the child, his intelligence, his health or the lack .of it, are often a result of inheritance

Through Contact: The first contact the child has with the mother is in the womb. This period of time also has an effect on the child. The physical health of the womb and the .mental and emotional health of the mother during pregnancy play an important role

The most important training however, is done during the years the child spends with

the parents. They are his first teachers, They give him an awareness, a world

view which will always color his thoughts and opinions. Many great aspirations, courageous behavior, noble manners as well as crooked personalities have been formed as an effect of parents. The first home a child knows should be a source of love and respect for him, a place that has order and arrangement. When a child feels secure and safe in his home and is assured of the love of his parents, he can begin to .develop mentally and emotionally

The most productive years for effective training are the first five years. During this time a child is willing to imitate blindly, and will undoubtedly carry out the actions of his parents. He will pick up behavior and forms of speech that become a part of him. Although it is important to note that this process will continue throughout his forming .years, the first few years will form the foundation and base of his character

During this time he is almost continuously with the parents (except for those who are sent to day-cares etc.). Later on, school, friends and other activities will take him away form the parents for lengthy periods of time. It must also be realized that the role of the mother during this time is more important than the role of the father, as most of .the time is spent with her

Aspects of Training

point

Many parents would like to train their children in the right way. But they are unsure of what exactly they should do in order to carry out

comprehensive and useful training. The following are some aspects of training every .parent should cover

Guidance

A child must be guided towards what is right. This includes teaching of beliefs and actions of religion, good manners, and moral and social values. The child should be taught about healthy ways of living, having good relationships with others, living a useful life in terms of helping and serving others. This type of training is done through talking to the child, showing a good example, sending him to Madrasah and other places of religious learning, involvement with the religious community, and an .awareness of the Muslim Ummah

The age and ability of the child must be kept in mind. Parents can use the help of teachers, relatives, community members, books, and other useful resources for this .aspect of training

Self-Control

A child should be taught that a human being is different from an animal. The value of the Aql cannot be underestimated and the child must learn to control his desires and wants. Emotions like anger, jealousy, greed, selfishness, etc. will all raise their ugly head. It is the duty of parents to deal with these emotions and help the child control .them

Thus it is wrong for parents to give in to every demand of the child, or to allow him to vent his anger when he is thwarted. It is part of training to help a child deal with disappointment and failure, to prevent him from being egoistic and selfish. Many children these days feel the

world should be at their feet, and their needs should be met on demand. Even when possible, it is wrong to give a child all he wants for it will create a personality that .cannot bear denial

Change

Although it is true that children inherit traits such as shyness, fear, etc. it is not true that these cannot be changed. Good training can help a child overcome certain characteristics that could hamper his progress in life. Parents need to first assess what negative traits are present in the child, and then plan how to overcome them. Useful tactics may include discussions with child, reading or narrating stories where .people overcame these behaviors, and encouraging the child to decrease the trait

So, for example, a shy child could be helped by being encouraged to mingle with others. In the beginning this could be with a small group of people, or people he is comfortable with. The child could be taught what to say, and how to control the fear to speak among others. Slowly the child will learn to overcome the shyness, or at least not allow it to control his life. This type of wise and gradual help is an important part of .training

Exploiting Potential

Life is of great value. The Almighty has given each human being various talents and potentials. He has given the treasure of time in this world so humans can achieve great things. They will then have something to show for themselves for an entrance .to a peaceful eternal abode

Through training parents can help their children to make the most of the talents and .time that God has given them

Children need to be taught about the harms of wasting time, of the evils of useless and vain pastimes. They should be encouraged to develop useful hobbies and pastimes. Their interests in various areas could be exploited. This includes their potential in religious fields such as Tilawat (recitation) of the Holy Qur'an, memorizing the Qur'an, learning the Arabic language, research into Islamic subjects etc. Habits learnt in childhood last for a long time. If a child becomes accustomed to reading in his leisure time, this will probably become a lifetime habit. But the child who learns to switch on the television, and looks only to the television for entertainment and .relaxation, will continue to do the same as an adult

Thus it is the duty of the parents to encourage their children to be creative with their abilities. They need to introduce them to the world of achievement, where many young people can achieve a great deal. Most important, they need to be taught to .refrain from useless and mindless pastimes

Lack of Training

No child can be brought up with a total lack of training. However parents differ in ways of training. Some parents believe that children will grow up and learn for themselves. It is unnecessary to burden them in their childhood years. Others think it is proper to expect children to be like adults, quick to understand what is

.right and quicker to obey

The correct view is in between. Children are not adults and need to be encouraged and guided. They will make mistakes and slip. The important thing is to continue the training and realize that it has an effect on the child, even if not immediate. Training of a child is a long process and no parent can expect that after a year or some years of .training, the job will be over

If every parent would realize the importance of good training, and work accordingly, society would become transformed. Characters would be molded in the right way, and .the new generation would have strong moral and social values

Many parents leave the job of training to teachers and society, not realizing that the education system today in most places is chillingly void of moral values. Society around the child is often immoral. Providing the right type of training is the primary duty of the parents.. Every child needs to be taught the right things, for he is not born with that awareness. By himself, it will take him a long time to learn true values, if .ever

Wise Words

The Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said, “The inheritance of Allah, the exalted, from His believing servant, is a child who will worship Him after him (his death).” Then he (the sixth Imam) recited the prayer of Nabi Zakariyya, My Lord, grant me from .Yourself an heir to inherit me and inherit from the children of Ya’qub

.(۱۹:۵)

(Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq (a

I have not asked my Lord for children with beautiful faces, nor for children with good figures, but I have asked my Lord for children who are obedient to Allah, who fear Him, so that when I look at him (one of them) and he is obedient to Allah, my eye is .delighted

(Imam ‘Ali(a

The right of a child over his parent is that he should give him a good name, make his .manners good, and teach him the Qur’an

(Holy Prophet (S

Lesson ۲: The Role of the Mother

point

Every society is made up of blocks of family units. The stronger each block is, the stronger the structure of the society. Families are thus the building blocks upon which rests the fate of society. For the development of good families, the mother plays a vital role. Many women today have aspirations of progress in their careers, and .degrees in various fields

However it is indisputable that the most important achievement of a mother is the raising of sensible, virtuous children who will then move on to build other strong blocks for society. It has been said that it is easy to bear children but it is difficult to .raise them well. In that lies the challenge for all mothers

Islam’s respect for the Mother

A Muslim mother has a valued and dignified role. Her contribution is acknowledged and appreciated. Her unparalleled gifts to the child have been aptly described by .Imam Zaynul ‘Abidin (a) in Risalatul Huqooq – The Chapter of Rights

It is the right of your mother that

p: ۹

you should appreciate that she carried you [in her womb] the way nobody carries anybody, She fed you the fruits of her heart which nobody feeds anybody. She protected you [during pregnancy] with her ears, eyes, hands, legs, hair, limbs, [in short] with her whole being, gladly, cheerfully, and carefully; suffering patiently all the .worries, pains, difficulties, and sorrows

Till the hand of God removed you from her and brought you into this world. Then she was most happy, feeding you forgetting her own hunger, clothing you even if she herself had no clothes, giving you milk and water not caring for her own thirst, keeping you in the shade, even if she had to suffer from the heat of the sun, giving you every comfort with her own hardships; lulling you to sleep while keeping herself .awake

The foundation of the family is laid with the decision to marry, and the importance of the mother is evident in Islamic teachings beginning with marriage, conception and then child rearing. The following points illustrate how Islam sanctifies the role of the mother

Emphasis on choosing a good wife

Islam advocates choosing of a wife based on moral characteristics. The Holy Prophet says: Marry into a decent family, for genes have effects. He is also reported to have encouraged Muslims to marry virtuous women in order to have virtuous children He has condemned those who look only for wealth and /or beauty when choosing a .spouse

Respect in this world

A mother commands great respect from her family. She is to be obeyed, and .venerated

The Qur'anic verses which talk about the rights of parents include the mother. However the Holy Prophet (S) has enjoined goodness to the mother even before the father. A man once came for advice to him, as to who he should be good to. The Prophet (S) advised him to do good to his mother again. Three times the man asked, and three times the Prophet (S) told him to do good to his mother. At the fourth time, the Prophet (S) told him to do good to his father. This well-known story clearly .illustrates the position of the mother in Islam

Respect in the Hereafter

The famous hadith of the Holy Prophet (S) says: Jannat lies under the feet of the mothers. A woman came to the Holy Prophet (S) and asked why going for Jihad was not obligatory on women. She was afraid that women were barred from achieving the .great reward for those who fought and died in the way of the Almighty

The Prophet (S) explained to her that a woman was a fighter in Allah's way from the time she became pregnant up to the time she delivered, and from the time she began breast-feeding till the time she stopped. If she died during that period, her position would be that of a martyr. To raise a virtuous child is one of the greatest good deeds. .It continues to bring reward even after death

Holy Qur'an on the Mother

:Allah says in Sura Luqman

And We have enjoined man in respect of his parents - his mother

bears him with faintings upon faintings, and his weaning takes two years – saying : “Be (grateful to Me and to both your parents, to Me is the eternal coming. (۳۱:۱۴

:And in Sura Ahqaf He says

And We have enjoined on man doing of good to his parents; with troubles did his mother bear him and with troubles did she bring him forth; and the bearing and the (weaning of him was thirty months. (۴۶:۱۵

In both the above verses, although both parents are mentioned, the mother is singled .out as she bears a greater responsibility and ultimately a greater reward

Two mothers are mentioned by name in the Qur’an. When Bibi Maryam, the mother of Nabi Isa (a) suffered the pangs of childbirth, she wished she was dead. She was all alone and worried about what was about to happen to her. At that time Allah consoled her and told her not to grieve. She was provided with fresh dates and water. She was also told to fast for three days by abstaining from talk, and Allah made the baby talk to .(prove that he was a miraculous baby (۱۹:۲۳-۲۶

The mother is shown concern and consideration for her state. Allah does not abandon her, or reprove her by telling her that she is privileged to give birth to a Prophet. Although that was true, motherhood entails great difficulty, a fact recognized by the .Qur’an

Another mother mentioned by the Qur’an is the mother of Prophet Musa (a). When she was told to

put her baby in the river, she was given an assurance that the baby would be returned to her. Allah knows the love of the mother, and knows it is difficult to give away one's .child

When the baby was picked up by Firawn's wife, he refused to suck the milk of any foster mother. Prophet Musa's sister then suggested that they try her mother. Mother (and baby unite, and Allah's promise was fulfilled. (Sura TaHa ۳۷-۴۰, Qasas ۷-۱۳

Qualities of a Mother

point

A good mother has outstanding qualities. No one can replace her in the life of her .children. The following are some of the things which make her so unique

A deep love for her children .۱

A mother's love is unmatched. Whether young or old, healthy or handicapped, troublesome or obedient, the child is still beloved to the mother. This love may be displayed in various forms. Sometimes children misinterpret scoldings and rebukes to be a sign of lack of love. It is important to assure the child that he is always loved, even when his behavior warrants disciplinary measures. Such a child becomes confident and happy, and will never seek solace elsewhere. The love of the mother becomes a source of happiness and peace at home. Children feel attached to the .home because of the mother

Sacrifice and dedication .۲

A mother gives up a great deal for the sake of the child. She gives up her time, her sleep, her pleasures etc. to ensure that the child is all right. As Imam Zaynul 'Abidin(a) says in his book Risalatul Huquq (mentioned earlier), nobody

comes even close to doing what a mother does for her child. That is why he says that it is only with help of the Almighty that one can thank the mother for all her sacrifice .and efforts

A good mother places the needs of the child, both physical and emotional needs, first. This is an important point to keep in mind, especially in these modern times. Women today are deluded by society into making their own careers and jobs more important than their homes. The home will always remain a woman's most valuable work and that may require all types of sacrifices. It is not really a sacrifice, but is an investment .which will reap great dividends

Protection and security .۳

A mother always tries to safeguard the child from danger and difficulties. However some mothers tend to be over protective. It is wise for the child to learn to face some problems in life, according to his age and circumstances. A coddled child will be unable to face the realities of the world when he grows up, a world which will not be as .considerate of him as his mother

The role of the Mother

A window of the child to the world

When a baby is born, he is totally unaware of the outside world. The mother plays an important part in introducing him to the world. The outlook that the child will form towards life depends a lot on the mother. His attitude, his views - religious or otherwise- his perspective on life and its goals, will all be gained from her. Eventually he will mature

and perhaps form his own changed views, but the initial years and what he learns in .them will always have a lasting impression on his mind

Model for the child

Since the mother is the most important person in the life of a child, she is greatly revered. Her habits and behavior become a model for the child. Whatever the child observes from her, such as her housekeeping habits, her manners, her relationships with others, the way she spends money, and in general her lifestyle, will all undoubtedly affect the child's character. A mother is said to be better than a hundred teachers. Her emotional strengths and weaknesses are an example for the child, and .will be followed for many years to come even though all of it may not be worthy

People have been reported to be following their mother's ways even when they know the mothers were wrong. It is almost like an unconscious reaction, and it takes effort to behave differently. Thus mothers have an important task of setting forth a good .example. It may seem difficult, even impossible

Many mothers think it too great a burden to be acting near perfect all the time, even in the familiarity of their own homes. However it is a good training. What mothers will change in themselves for their children will become a habit, and will lead to a real change. It is not perfection that Islam demands from mothers, but a willingness to .accept the responsibility of modeling good acceptable behavior

Many great

people remember their mothers and the role they played in nurturing their greatness. Sayyid ar-Radhi, the compiler of Nahjul Balgha, mourned the death of his mother greatly. He wrote a poem for her in which he says:

O Mother! I cry and shed tears for your separation hoping that perhaps the burning drops of tears coming out of my sorrowful eyes may melt and remove the mountain of sadness from my heart.

O Mother! You were such a precious jewel and valuable pearl that for getting you released from the plundering enemy's hand I would have sacrificed everything in my possession as your ransom. But Alas! The death ahs snatched you away from my hand and nothing can be taken back from its deadly claws.

O Mother! If all the mothers of the world would have been righteous like you, indeed the children of the world would not have required the presence of their fathers.

O Mother! All are witness that you were an honorable and noble lady because you have handed over decent and noble children to society.(۱)

Shaykh Mutaza Ansari, a great Shi'a Jurist also wept bitterly at the death of his mother. One of his scholarly pupils reproached him, saying it did not befit a learned scholar to agonize so much over the death of his mother. The Shaykh replied: It seems you are not aware of the high status enjoyed by a mother. The proper training given by this mother of mine to me, and the numerous hardships borne by her

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۱- Excerpts from Meeting the Pious, Ash-Sharif ar-Radi

for my sake elevated me to this position. The initial training given by her to me paved the way for my making all this progress and acquiring this high status in the world of .knowledge

Strengths of a Mother

point

.The following qualities need to be acquired by all mothers

Awareness of responsibility

Motherhood is a career, and those who take it up must try and excel at it. It is the duty of every mother to look into better techniques and strategies of parenting. A wide variety of material is available, both Islamic and secular. Although Islamic material may not be abundant in English, many secular books and magazines are published about parenting. Reading these from time to time helps increase awareness and vision. When a mother reads about problems that parents face, she is comforted by the fact that she is not alone. That is very reassuring as often parents assume they are the only ones having difficulties. Also, reading about solutions used by other people, or advice given by psychologists etc. helps broaden the choice of possible .tactics in dealing with children

Setting clear goals

A mother has to know what she expects from her children, and then explain that to them. It is not enough to want good children. The children must know what exactly is expected from them, and what the mother wants them to do. Sometimes a mother .tells the child to lay the table properly

Because it has not been explained to the child what properly means, he does it the way he thinks it right. The

child may consequently be blamed for being sloppy, lazy etc. for not setting the table right. The frustration and heartache could have been avoided if the child knew exactly .what was expected from him, rather than a vague order to lay the table

The same can be applied to all chores, behavior with others, academic achievements .etc. The mother must have definite goals of what she wants, and make them clear

Encourage children according to their potential

Each child comes with his own distinctive potential. The Holy Prophet (S) has said: Human beings are like mines of gold and silver. Children have abilities that could lead to great achievements. Some show skill and interest in a certain area, while others .prefer a different one

Apart from not trying to compare children with one another, a good mother tries to bring out the best in each child. She makes the child develop his skills in whatever area he is good at, as well as remedy the weakness in each child. If one child is very shy, for example, the mother should not demand that he socialize and interact with others the .way his siblings do

Some mothers unwittingly put their children through a great deal of embarrassment .and humiliation

The child must be taught to overcome his shyness. Some books on shyness may help. Or the mother could give practical suggestions of what the child could talk about to others. A mother’s gentle guidance can remedy many a flaw and weakness in the .character of the child

Wise Words

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.Fortunate is the person whose mother is chaste and virtuous

(Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a

Each one of you is a guardian (shepherd), and each one of you is responsible for his .۲ charges . . . so the man is a guardian over his family, and is responsible for them. A woman is a guardian over the family of her husband and his children, and she is .responsible for them

(Holy Prophet (S

Lesson ۳: Religious Training of children

point

Parents have been given the noble duty of guiding the future generation. It is their task to ensure that their children get a sound religious education. In this they are :carrying on the work of the Prophets, who guided the people. The Holy Qur'an says

O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is man (and stones. (۶۶:۶

In today's society, a lot of emphasis is placed on secular education. A child is pushed to strive for excellence in academics. A college or University education is a necessity, both for boys and girls. Education is indeed very important, but the significance of .religious education for a balanced personality must not be overlooked

The world is producing a generation that knows a lot, but is greatly deficient in moral and spiritual values. The Holy Prophet (S) was once talking to his companions about the importance of religious education. He told them he was "baree" (far) from the parents of the last times. They asked him the reason and he explained that those parents wold

give a lot of importance to secular education, but neglect the religious education. May .the Almighty protect us from being amongst them

What exactly is meant by religious education? The following are some necessary .parts of a religious training

Beliefs

In God

A firm faith in the Creator is the source of all good. If a child grows up to believe in God, he will learn to be conscientious. Life will hold meaning and responsibility. Children must be taught about the existence of God, and the abundance of blessings He has bestowed upon us. Nature, Science, etc. could all be used to point out the greatness of the Creator. Expose the child to books and films that show people with a firm faith in God, and illustrate how the faith helps them overcome obstacles and .problems

Children should not be given the impression that Allah would like to punish humans for every wrong they do. Some parents and educators warn children about the punishment of Allah in order to scare them into being good. Although it is necessary to talk about punishment at times, it is of greater advantage to focus on the positive .side

Allah is greatly merciful, loves us and is willing to help and guide us. Teach children to love Allah, trust in Him, and to ask from Him all their needs. This positive attitude will .help the child build a lasting relationship with Allah

In the Hereafter

Children should be gradually introduced to the idea of death and the life hereafter. Although it may be

confusing for younger children, it is advisable that parents talk about it from time to time, especially as the children grow older. A death in the family or community could be used as an example that all humans are mortal, and each one of us will go the same way. It is best to be honest with the child.

In the Prophets and Imams

It is necessary for children to understand the role of the Prophets, and to have love for the Holy Prophet (S) and the Imams (a). This can be taught by reading stories from their lives to them. It is also important to attach significance to the occasions when we commemorate their births and deaths. Going to the Masjid or Imambargha on these occasions helps a great deal. They remember the said personality and also learn something about him or her. It is a great way of keeping their faith alive.

Rituals

Although beliefs are most important, parents have also to teach the practical part of following religion. Faith and action go together. From a young age, a child should be encouraged to pray, recite the Qur'an, perform wudhu etc. Some parents think it is a bother to have young children do these things and wait until they are almost baligh. The love for such actions does not develop, and many children then have to be forced to carry them out. It is much better to start at an age when children are willing to imitate the parents and have an interest in praying

.and doing wudhu

The daily prayer is the most important action is Islam, and it is the duty of all parents to ensure that the child prays properly and regularly. A Hadith of the Holy Prophet (S) says: Teach your children the prayer when they are seven, and beat them if they do .not recite it when they are ten

Thus when the child becomes baligh and does not wish to pray it is necessary to force him to do so. It should be mentioned that children need to be observed when they first begin to pray by themselves. Many children pray very quickly, and the actions resemble a quick exercise rather than a prayer. If possible, parents should try and .pray with their children, at least sometimes

Encourage the child to follow the parent in prayer, as this will make the child pray slower and more carefully. If this is repeated enough times, it becomes a habit. It is not a good idea to tell children to pray by themselves in their rooms, out of the view of parents. This could encourage the child to skip prayers altogether, and then lie about it. Parents must not allow opportunities where children are tempted to lie. Shaytan is .very strong, and a child is easy prey

A hadith by Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) on getting children accustomed to fasting says: We enjoin our children to fast when they are seven years old, whatever part of the .fast they are able to keep

So when it is midday or further [into the day], and thirst overcomes them, they break .the fast, so that they become accustomed to fasting and can endure it

Another important part of religious training is to teach the child to recite the Qur'an. It is a right of the child, as specified by a hadith of the Prophet (S) Many parents are already aware of this responsibility and strive to make their children good reciters of the Qur'an. But one must be wary not to do it to compete with others, or to show off to .the community

Some children become fluent reciters of the Qur'an but are not regular in their prayers and are generally lax in their obedience to Allah. Fluency in Qur'an recitation is not a criteria. It is undoubtedly an asset. The child must also be encouraged to understand the Qur'an. This could be done through reading the translation .occasionally, or even learning the Arabic language

Morals

This is an extremely important aspect of Islam and should not be ignored. Good morals are the key to a virtuous life. The child should be taught about noble characteristics such as honesty, kindness, justice, contentment etc. He should be taught to avoid jealousy, backbiting, greed, extravagance etc. Many opportunities .come up in daily life for parents to bring up such issues

It is not necessary to give a lecture or nag. A small reminder, or a simple discussion .often makes a lasting impression. Grandparents can play an influential role here

They could be asked to advise children and narrate stories to them. Many children remember the advice given to them by their parents and grandparents long into adulthood. Parents should never underestimate the effect of their words and deeds .on the hearts of their children

Methods of Religious Training

Be a model to your children

Actions speak much louder than words. No amount of advice of a parent to refrain from backbiting will work if the child often hears the parent backbiting himself. When the child is exposed to hypocrisy, lying, selfishness and other such qualities at home, it is very likely that he will grow up following the same. A good example from the .parents works even without words

A child who grows up in a home where time of prayers is maintained, where hypocrisy in relations is avoided, and where contentment prevails, will grow up to do the same. Although it may seem a huge task to be able to be a good model for the child, parents should know that it is the only way they can really teach their children. No other way is .as effective

Relate stories

Stories are a very appealing way to teach lessons. The Holy Qur'an says after ;(narrating the story of Prophet Yusuf (a

(In their narrations there is certainly a lesson for men of understanding.(۱۲:۱۱۱

Children are especially fascinated by stories. They can become absorbed in a story without realizing that they are learning some lessons. Many parents read to their children each day, especially when the children are young. It would be a good

idea to occasionally read Islamic story books. Many of these are available today, with .beautiful and colorful illustrations

Parents should use these to inspire children. As they begin to read by themselves, parents should encourage occasional reading of some good Islamic and moral books. When left to decide for themselves, children read a lot of junk literature. If it is not possible to avoid all of it, it should be at least minimized as much as possible. The child .must be given alternative choices so that he can still read

Questions and Answers

Children ask a lot of questions. Sometimes parents do not have the answers and must admit that they need to look it up. But it is unfair to ignore the questions or dismiss .them as unimportant. The more they ask, the more they will learn

An interest in his questions and confusions will help the child develop his mental and intellectual abilities. Encourage the child to learn more by asking more, even if all the .answers cannot be given immediately

Some Don’ts in Religious Training

Don’t do it harshly. Getting angry with the child and forcing him leads to resentment. It .is better to explain, and discuss with the child

Don’t overdo it. Teach religion in moderate doses. Overdoing it can be harmful and can be a burden for a child. A young child, for example, should not be made to recite a .lot of duas and mustahab prayers if he is unwilling

Don’t teach Islam to show off. Children should not be taught to be religious so

.parents can be proud of them in the community

Don’t make Islam a burden. Some parents believe that Islam is too difficult. Although they practice it, they pass on the feeling that to them hijab, fasting, and other such .rules are really a great burden. This will discourage the child

Wise Words

۱. A virtuous child is a fragrant flower from the flowers of Heaven.

(Holy Prophet (S

۲. No parent has given a better gift to his child than good manners.

(Imam Ali (a

۳. The Rights of a child

It is the right of your child to know that he is from you, and with all his virtue and vice, is connected to you in this world. You are responsible for instructing him in good manners, guiding him towards his Lord, helping him to follow His commands which concern you or him, and you will be rewarded or punished [according to how you fare in this responsibility]. Therefore you should endeavor in his training like the person who is going to be adorned by his good influence [upon his child] in this world and [wants to be] vindicated in the presence of his Lord concerning his responsibility about .the child

Imam Zaynul Abidin (a) in Risalatul Huqooq

Lesson ۴: A Child’s need for Love

point

The need to be loved is exceptionally strong in all human beings. From childhood to old age, humans want to be loved by those around them. Love connects people in the strongest of ways. It produces care and concern, without which no one would take the responsibility of looking

after others. Love makes the difficulties of life bearable, and helps ease the struggles of life. The love given to a child is more important than any material goods the family can provide.

Life cannot just run on cold and hard rules. The warmth of love is necessary to infuse spirit and joy in life. A home without love, however orderly and organized, has not fulfilled its true purpose. A family is not just a micro-organization where the needs of members are met. This could be done by a state run facility. A family's outstanding characteristic is that members love one another, and this emotion binds them together.

Love or the lack of it has a profound effect on the lives of children. Their mental capabilities, their fluency of speech, their observations and deductions on life, are all affected by it. That is why Islam emphasizes the display of love to one's family. The Holy Prophet (S) loved his grandsons dearly, and often showed great affection to them in public.

When Husayn (a) got on his back while he was in sajdah, the Holy Prophet (S) prolonged his sajdah. He could not bear to see his grandsons cry, or get hurt. He encouraged his companions to show affection to their children.

Effects of Love

point

A child who knows he is loved has a great head start on life.

۱. He is happier and calmer. A child who is loved is at peace with the world, and is able to bear disappointments better. Without love, a child's world

.is bleak. Such a child often resorts to misbehavior to get attention

He is more confident of himself. He knows that he is worthy of being loved, and that .۲ .is a great boost to his self-esteem

He can form better relationships with others. A loving relationship with the parents .۳ makes the child a kinder, more loving person. Lack of love hardens the heart, and he .could become less prone to showing love for others

Has a positive outlook on life. A child who is loved looks at the world with enthusiasm .۴ He will be eager to try and experience new things. A loveless home produces a .negative outlook, in which the natural curiosity and interest in life is deadened

The child will be more responsive to what parents tell him. Reproaches and . ۵ scoldings become bearable when he knows he is loved. Parental orders are followed .with more enthusiasm

Letting the child know he is loved

It goes without saying that most parents love their children dearly. It is a natural instinct placed by the Almighty into the heart of all parents. This love for children is a sign of the wisdom of Allah, for without it no parent would have borne all the pains and .troubles of raising a child

However, many parents think that children know, without being told, that parents love them. They do not realize that children need to be reassured constantly. The effects of love must be evident in the speech and behavior of the parents. Children do not have the

wisdom and insight of adults to realize that even punishments and reproaches are signs of love. They often perceive the actions of the parents as a proof of the lack of love. It is thus very important to display love to the child, or at least inform him about it .in subtle ways

The display of love varies with the age and level of the child. It is most important at the very young age when children need to be cuddled and hugged. For a baby, physical display of love is necessary for positive growth and development. All through the toddler years physical affection remains the most prominent way of displaying .love. As the child grows, this changes to less direct ways of showing affection

The occasional physical touch is still necessary, but is not the main way of showing love. Now the child has various needs and desires. To be considerate of his desires, talking to him constantly, reading to him, taking interest in his schoolwork etc. are all part of love. Love shows its bright face in the form of a smile, a tender tone, a patient .ear, etc. A parent's full attention tells the child he is loved enough to warrant it

The older child has friends who are every important to him. To give importance to his friends is a good way of displaying love for him. Generally speaking, when a parent ,gives positive attention to the child, apart from the regular chores of bathing, feeding

.etc. the child understands that he is loved

The love of a mother

There is no doubt that the love of a mother is a very special gift from the Almighty for a child. It differs from the love of a father, or the love of any other person. The tender .hand of a mother and her soothing voice has calmed many a troubled child

Mothers are thus the main instruments of transmitting love to the child. At its best, the love of a mother is completely unselfish, wanting nothing in return for the tremendous .amounts of time and energy spent in raising the children

From the time of birth, when a child knows the mother as a source of food and comfort, and all through childhood, the mother is the main caregiver for the child. The atmosphere at home depends on the nature of the mother. A loving, caring mother .can do a great deal to make her family a happy and emotionally healthy family

Unconditional Love

Some parents only love their children if they fulfill certain expectations. Gender sometimes plays a great role. So a boy after a few daughters elicits great affection and attention. Some families just prefer boys, even if they have equal numbers of both. Such gender biases are greatly condemned in Islam. The Holy Prophet (S) had a daughter at a time when daughters were disliked. He showed great love and respect .for her despite the taunts of the Arabs

Some parents only show their love for the child if he is

attractive, behaves well, and generally lives up to their expectations. Such a love is conditional. If the child brings a good report card, he is showered with praise and affection. A bad report card will not only bring reproach for the low marks, but will make the child feel completely rejected.

Parents often forget that it is only a particular act that should be condemned, not the child in general. A child who obeys is praised for his obedience, but loved for himself. In the same way, a child who is disobedient is reproached for his disobedience, but still loved for himself.

Many parents fail to draw the line and make their love conditional to the acts of the child. All children have faults, and the parental reaction to these faults sometimes convinces a child that he is not loved at all. It is necessary that parents ensure that the child understands it is only his act that is disliked and not he himself.

A child deserves the unconditional love of the parents.

Excessive Love

A potential danger for many parents is excessive love for the children. It is often difficult to control the intensity of emotion one feels for a child. Thus a child may be showered with a lot of love, often misdirected. Everything in excess is harmful, and too much love is detrimental to the child. The fifth Imam, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a) has said: The worst of parents are those who transgress the limits in their love and goodness

.to their children

Excessive love is when a parent pampers the child, refusing to let him face any trouble or difficulty, tending to his every need, and giving in to his desires. Its results could :include

The child becomes totally reliant on the parents. Even as he grows, the chances of- ۱ emotional and mental maturity are slim. He has less courage and feels offended .easily. He becomes more like a soft egg which needs constant protection

The demands of the child who is excessively loved are unending. He will constantly - ۲ want more – more attention, more treats, more toys etc. When refused or frustrated, .he will resort to whining and complaining

He may become very egoistic, and expect the same degree of attention from - ۳ others in his life. The child feels that he is the center of the world for his parents, and thus all things should revolve around him. He believes he has no faults, or at least none that others can perceive. This elevated perception of himself often lands him in .trouble, especially when others do not see him in the same way

When others will not give him the same attention and pampering he has known - ۴ from his parents, he will be unable to bear the disappointment. Often such people lose confidence in themselves, and feel they are not worth much as they have not been .granted the degree of attention they believe is their due

Wise Words

Kiss your children often, for every display .۱

.of affection will raise your status in Heaven

(Holy Prophet (S

.Allah has mercy on a parent who loves his child greatly .۲

(Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq (a

Lesson ۵: Self–Esteem and Children

point

Self-esteem is defined as feeling oneself worthy of the respect of others. All human beings have an innate desire to be respected and liked. They want others to look up to them. There is great wealth in self-esteem. It brings confidence in one’s own abilities, and helps in initiating and achieving one’s goals. Feeling good about oneself brings peace and happiness to the heart. It boosts the spirit and produces noble characters .and lofty ideas

Self-esteem is different from vanity. When a person has some good qualities and/or abilities, to know that and be thankful for it, is self-esteem. To be proud about it, and to think oneself to be better than others is vanity. There is a fine line between the two, but a basic difference is the understanding that all that is good in one-self comes from Allah. That eliminates all feelings of pride and leaves only gratitude for it, and the .desire to be able to use it in the best way

From a very young age, children show a desire for respect and attention. They show off in order to get praise. Sometimes when attention is not forthcoming, they revert to negative behavior such as fighting and screaming in order to get attention. There are .various views on the origins of this desire for respect

Some psychologists believe it stems from a

natural desire for success over others. Others say it comes from a love of self, an egoism inherent in all human beings. Religious scholars believe that within the human :resides a Divine spirit. Almighty Allah says in the Qur'an

So when I have made him complete, and breathed into him of My spirit fall down into .(prostration to him (۱۵:۲۹

This Divine spirit, with its greatness and nobility, propels the human being towards dignity and respect. He needs to be valued, and would not naturally put himself in a derogatory or lowly position. The Creator Himself has respected the human being :when He says

(And indeed We have honored the son of Adam. (۱۷:۷۰

Thus the human being has the expectation that others will also respect him in this world. Whatever be the origin of the desire for respect, all scholars believe that a healthy self-esteem is a vital ingredient for the progress and success of the human .being. The roots of this important quality are often built, or destroyed, in childhood

Advantages of a Healthy Self-Esteem

The child who knows that he has some good qualities that others respect is satisfied .۱ with himself. This will translate into rational and calm behavior. There will be no need for tantrums and aggressiveness to demand attention. A child with self-esteem is a .happy child

Such a child values himself, and knows that he has a certain respect and dignity. .۲ Thus there will be lesser chances for him to become involved in acts which lower the status he envisions

for himself. A child who respects himself will not easily give in to peer pressure to perform immoral and indecent acts. He would realize that it is beneath himself to stoop to it.

3. A child with self-esteem will try harder to achieve high goals. He knows he is capable of good, and can set lofty targets to achieve. He will have the initiative to start things and get involved in various activities.

When Self-Esteem is Lacking

1. The child gives in to wrong more easily. He is easily swayed by others as it is difficult to be firm on one's own principles when there is no confidence in oneself. The views and opinions of others will carry great weight. Such children run a higher risk of succumbing to peer pressure and joining unseemly groups.

2. A child who has no self-esteem accepts failure as his lot. He will not try to challenge himself, or have high expectations of himself. He does not think he has the ability to achieve anything good. This resignation to failure sets ground for future defeats, and the lack of struggle to progress in life.

3. He suffers more from negative emotions such as anger, jealousy, frustration etc. A child who has confidence in himself, can accept another child's success as he knows that he too is successful. But when that consolation is absent, jealousy is a natural reaction. Often there is anger at oneself, or even at others who may be seen as responsible for the failures. There is then little room

for happy, healthy feelings necessary to make the child an emotionally stable human .being

How to foster self–esteem in a child

point

Having seen the importance of self-esteem in the life of a child, many people wonder what can be done to ensure that a child has a healthy sense of self-esteem. There is much that parents can do, or avoid doing, that will help the child to respect himself. The following points are not meant to raise the child on a pedestal, and turn him into a .proud, selfish brat

When doled out in moderation, these tactics will help foster a feeling a sense of self-worth. All parents should use discretion in their individually unique circumstances to .avoid over indulging and spoiling the child. These points are given only as guidance

Show respect to the child

Many parents do not feel it necessary to respect the child. They expect respect, but believe that respecting the child will amount to spoiling him. However respect for the child in the following ways will help the child feel good about himself, as well as :respect the parent more willingly

a) Talk to the child in a normal voice or tone. Don't belittle the child by talking in a childish voice. Talk to him constantly, not only when you want to scold him or tell him to do something. Talk about everyday affairs; school, work, political issues, stories .from your past, etc. etc

Some parents believe that because children do not understand at the level of adults, there is not much use in talking to them. But children who

are talked to more often become more understanding and insightful than those who are not. These children feel a sense of communication with the parents, and know that their parents deem them worthy of a conversation. It is a great boost in .confidence

b) When scolding the child, do not totally destroy his feeling of self-worth. Reprove him for a particular action rather than a general "you are good for nothing" attitude which, if dealt out constantly, will lead the child to actually believe it. As quick as parents are to point out a wrong act, they should remember there are good qualities .also present in the child

c) Listen to his ideas and opinions. When the child wishes to say what he thinks of something, encourage him to talk. Don't ridicule or put him down. A child will not have the wisdom of an adult but deserves to be listened to so that he will be forthcoming in his views in future. Dismissing a child's opinions as unworthy is a perfect way to .suppress any thoughtfulness or creativity in the child

d) Sometimes speak positively about him to others. When a child hears himself being talked about positively, he feels that it is a sincere appreciation. It need not be long praises, or undeserved praise. But when the child does something good, mention it to a relative, or a friend, etc. This will seem more genuine and have more effect than a word of praise to the child himself. Parents who criticize

and complain about the child to others, in front of the child, often ruin any feeling of self-worth the child may have. Sometimes parents and relatives act as if the child cannot hear. They discuss him in his presence, comparing him to others and .mentioning the bad qualities he has. This has a very negative effect on the child

Teach the child to think highly of himself

Encourage him to set goals and have high expectations of himself. In school and Madrasah and any other activities he may be involved in, help him to do well and to achieve the utmost possible with his capabilities. A push of encouragement from the .parent, as well as concerned interest, helps the child try hard in his daily activities

Teach him that certain things are below his dignity. These could include complaining too much, asking for things from others, getting into trouble with authority etc. The child will become habituated to a certain type of behavior. Anything below that will .seem unworthy for himself

Make him familiar with stories of great people

Children love stories, and these are a great medium for imparting valuable lessons. When the children are young and rely on parents to read to them, use the opportunity to read inspiring stories of great people. Many Islamic books for children are available these days, and Muslim parents should make good use of them. Even when reading secular stories, search your local libraries for stories that will inspire the child towards good virtues. Heroes and their heroic actions are often imprinted in the minds of the child, and this

will do more to push him towards noble behavior than a lecture from the parents. Manipulate the interest in stories to gain a sense of respect and dignity for noble .behavior

Listen to the child's wishes

Sometimes a child is opposed to what the parent wishes him to do. This could be as simple as an enforcement of bedtime, wearing of appropriate clothes, or going for a particular outing, etc. The child may have a different view as to what should be done. A good parent would listen to what the child has to say. This does not mean that the parent gives in to the child, or lets him do as he wishes. It just means that the parent respects the child's opinions although not necessarily following it. The child will .eventually do as the parent wishes, but will feel that he was listened to

Practical Do's Don'ts for fostering self–esteem

Do give your child responsibility at home. Give him basic duties and chores, according to his age, to do around the house. It is important that the child feels he is part of the .household and is needed for the daily work that goes into running the home

Do talk to him about major changes or decisions being made for the family. If a new house is being bought, or a job is being changed, let the child know about it. Often .parents leave the child completely out of important decisions being made

Do teach him not to accept undue praise or flattery. The child likes to be praised but should only accept

.it when deserved

Don’t interfere in everything your child does. The child needs some space for healthy independence and originality. If he wishes to arrange his things in a particular way, for example, or plans something for himself, let him do it so long as it is not wrong in any serious way. Some parents expect children will do everything exactly as they wish, and fuss over every small detail in the child’s life. Such a child grows up to feel he .cannot make any decisions for himself

Don’t pamper the child too much when he is sick, or hurt. The child should be taught to be strong and bear a little pain. If allowed to whine and cry a great deal, the child may .learn to be a complainer and will be unable to bear difficulties

Don’t ignore the child when you have company. When a family has guests, Islamic etiquette demands that the host pay great respect to the guests. This does not mean however, that children should be ignored and brushed aside. Instead the parent should encourage the child to be part of the gathering, and involve him with the .guests

Wise Words

point

.Allah has decreed everything for a believer, except that he humiliate himself .۱

(Holy Prophet (S

A lesson from the Life of the Prophet

One day the Prophet was sitting with his companions when he saw a young child in the group. Having a great love for children, he called him and sat him on his lap. The people around him watched as the Prophet (S) gave his attention

to the child. Suddenly the boy, over-awed perhaps, urinated on the lap of the Prophet(S). Embarrassed, the father sprang forward. “What have you done, you silly boy” he shouted. His arm shoved forward to grab the child away from the Prophet(S), his red face showing his anger. Fear and confusion showed in the face of the child. The Prophet(S) restrained the man, and gently hugged the child to him. “Don’t worry,” he told the over-zealous father. “This is not a big issue. My clothes can be washed. But be careful with how you treat the child” he continued. “What can restore his self-esteem after you have dealt with him in public like this?”

Lesson ۶: Discipline and Control

point

It is the right of every child to be disciplined by wise and reasonable parents. A parent uses control and discipline to guide the child. Human beings by nature, tend to lean towards evil. Allah says in the Holy Qur’an:

Surely the soul is wont to command (towards) evil except, such as my Lord has mercy on. (۱۲:۵۳)

Without discipline human beings are prone to wrongdoing,. A child is especially vulnerable to such tendencies for he lacks the wisdom and maturity of an adult. It is easier and more pleasant to follow the dictates of the soul. To follow what is right, morally and logically, requires a firm will. This does not come automatically to a child, but can be developed through discipline.

A good home has certain rules which children must follow. Children feel better

when they know they are expected to follow certain guidelines in their daily life. Not only does life become more organized, but they are also freed from the burden of making decisions for themselves when not really in a position to do so. Although they .may outwardly resent it, all children need some discipline to feel secure in life

Discipline and control in Islam is not equal to dictatorship. Good parents take into consideration the age and understanding of the child, his circumstances, and other .relative factors. Rules are then made accordingly

Sometimes the child's wishes are considered and a compromise is made. There is certain flexibility rather than rigid adherence to the rules. However there is no doubt that Islam expects parents to remain in control, to make sure the children follow .certain etiquette in behavior rather than a chaotic do-as-you-please attitude

Advantages of Discipline

Safety from physical and moral danger

A child with no discipline will be free to do whatever he wishes. At a young age this may often result in physical harm. As he grows, a lax attitude towards his behavior and associations may result in moral dangers. Discipline and control helps ensure the .child does not stray into unwanted and unseemly territory

Avoids wrong influences

A child is often naive, and believes what others tell him, especially his peers. A child without control may have the wrong friends, get involved in the wrong activities, and .generally begin to have very different morals and values from the parents

A chance to be successful

The child who is disciplined has a much better chance of

succeeding than the child who is not. He can achieve better at school, be more mature .and intelligent, and get accustomed to good habits

Feels loved and secured

Lack of discipline at home is often interpreted as lack of attention from the parents. This could be due to lack of love or lack of time. Both of these are harmful for the child. Discipline, however hateful, is a sign of concern and love from the parents. It brings .with it a security and sense of belonging

?What to control

Many parents agree that control is necessary, but are not sure of exactly what should be controlled. How much of a child's life should the parents control? The following are .some important aspects of a child's life that should be regulated by parents

Going out

As a child grows, he often requests to go out with friends. A parent should be in full control as to where the child is going, with whom, and for how long. Allowing the child .to go whenever and wherever he pleases is sure to invite trouble

Friends

The influence of friends is greatly emphasized in Islam. The Holy Prophet (S) says: The conduct of everyone will be according to the beliefs and principles of his friend. Good friends can make a great difference to the molding of character. Thus a parent has to be vigilant of the child's friends. Always being in the company of one who has loose .morals, or a dirty tongue, or other such vices, will rub off on the child

Discourage very close connections

such as frequent telephone calls, sleeping over at each other's homes etc. Moderation in all fields is necessary for progress. It is necessary for a child to have friends but it is .also necessary that the parents know whom the child befriends

Language

The tongue is reported to be the source of great good and great evil. Imam Muhammad al-Baqir says: Indeed this tongue is the key to all good and all evil, so it befits a believer to guard his tongue the way he would guard his gold and silver. Parents should control the type of language a child uses. Dirty and swear words .should be completely forbidden

Some children pick up various odd ways of speaking from school. These words may not necessarily be filthy, but are indicators of an attitude that must be avoided. Examples, are "who cares?" "get a life" "buzz off" etc. Such expressions vary from place to place, but in general are prominent in today's younger generations. Parents must teach their children to avoid such expressions for they go against the dignity and .character of a good Muslim

Time

No child can be forced to follow a tight schedule set by parents. This is unrealistic. On the other hand, however, it is irresponsible to allow children do whatever they wish with their time. It is necessary to control the amount of time spent on leisure activities. They cannot be allowed to play and watch television as much as they desire. Children must be encouraged to do some useful

things with their time. Examples could be taking up a good hobby, learning computer programs, accessing beneficial web-sites etc. It is up to each parent to decide what is .most suitable for his children

Behavior

Although every parent knows he has to instill good manners into his children, many children still get away with unacceptable forms of behavior. Rudeness, asking for things from others, shouting at elders, disrespect in the mosque or at people's homes etc. are all examples of behavior that should not be tolerated. When such behavior is seen even after warnings are given, the child must be punished appropriately. It should be made clear to the child that there are some limits that he cannot cross .without facing the consequences. Discipline in this way helps the child control himself

Some Important Points

When disciplining a child, the parent should refrain from becoming a dictator. A rule .۱ is not to be followed because "I say so" but because it is the right thing to do. The basis of all discipline is the safety and progress of the child. Talk to your children often about why you set rules and enforce certain laws. Inspire them with stories of great characters, through books and verbal narration. Do not allow the child to fear you. Allow him to air his view sometimes even if you do not agree with him. Hear him out .and then explain why you think he needs to be corrected

Be in control of yourself when disciplining. Sometimes parents go overboard .۲

in their attempts to discipline. The home becomes a military camp with strict rules being enforced all the time. It is advisable that parents tamper their discipline with gentleness and love. A harsh venting of anger is not discipline. Physical force and nagging should be avoided. Parents should say what is necessary without making it a long lecture and bringing up old problems. This way the child will take it more seriously rather than shrugging it off as just another lecture. Harsh disciplining could also lead to despair in the child. He may assume that he can never acquire the behavior .expected of him. This happens when expectations are impractical and inappropriate

When a mistake has been made, allow the child to make amends. Let him apologize .۳ and if necessary, carry out the designated punishment. This could include the loss of a privilege, writing lines, time out, or some extra chores. A variety of punishments may be used to ensure that the child does not get away with misbehavior. However, after that has been done, the parents should not continue to be angry and refuse to talk to the child in a normal manner. It is better to get over the anger and become friends again soon. Prolonged anger produces sadness and sometimes resentment in the .child

Teach the child internal control. Parental control is external. It is good and . ۴ necessary. But better than that is internal control, when a child learns to discipline himself. He should be able

to stop himself from inappropriate actions even when the parents are not around. :This is only possible if

a) He has learnt the value and wisdom of the rule. So, for example, if he understands that it is against one's dignity to be rude and call others names, he may stop himself from doing it. The child must have conviction that what he should do is really best for .his personality. That will automatically make him do it

b) The parent has not continuously nagged him about it. Constant nagging produces resentment and anger. This could then be channeled to a defiant following of wrong .behavior even when the child understands it is wrong

c) He has seen the respect given to those who behave in the right way. If the child has been exposed to examples, contemporary or in history, who have earned respect and popularity because of their good manners and virtues, he becomes more inclined to follow their path. If he has only been fed on television stars and the examples that abound in today's modern society, he will not aspire to acquire good morals. It is the .duty of parents to create an urge in him to have a respectable personality

Wise Words

May Allah have mercy on the one who helps his child towards righteousness by being .good to him, appealing to him, teaching him knowledge, and training him

(Imam Ali (a

;Luqman the wise told his son .١

My son, if you learn good etiquette when you are young, you will benefit

from it when you are older. Whoever values good etiquette will give importance to it. And whoever gives it importance will take the trouble to learn it. And whoever takes the trouble to learn it will struggle in its search. And whoever struggles in its search .will achieve it, and benefit from it

My son! Get accustomed to carry out your own duties and works. And be patient over the difficulties you encounter from others. If you wish to acquire honor in the world, cut off your hopes from what lies with others. Surely the Prophets and the Righteous .reached their status by cutting off their hopes

Lesson ۷: Children and Play

point

Most parents view playing as a waste of time. They would like a child to grow out of the love for playing and get into more serious things like studies, research, or even household chores. It seems more like a childish behavior that must be tolerated, and .the sooner it is over the better

However they forget that play is an important part of growing up, and is vital for the physical and emotional development of the child. Play is the first source of learning .basic social skills necessary for life

A child loves to play, and it is a form of punishment for the child to be deprived of playtime. This desire to play, anywhere and with anything, is most evident in the early years. It is a sign of emotional and physical health. A child who does not wish to play should

.be a source of concern

Benefits of Play

Physical Benefits

A child's body develops through physical play. His senses sharpen, his reactions become refined, and he learns the use of appropriate limbs to achieve his goals. In the beginning years, play helps a child learn about the world around him as he touches and feels the objects within his reach. Bones become stronger, vision is sharpened and the limbs become stronger. Running and exercising helps the flow of .blood and results in a healthier, happier child

Mental Benefits

Play provides answers to the curiosity and restlessness of the child. The imagination of a child is very strong, and play helps to bring it out. A child can thus imagine that he is a principal and his friends are the students, or that he and his friends are part of a family and they take on the role of adults. Such play makes the child creative as he .puts himself in another's role

The child also learns certain forms of behavior through play. He learns about fairness and justice, about sharing and caring. He learns to become alert and watchful. He becomes lively and enthusiastic. He learns to invent solutions when he is in a fix and .how to outwit his rivals in play. All these tactics are of great use later in life

Emotional benefits

Children often get angry when they do not achieve their desires. When they lose a game, they may sulk, or whine, or even attack the rival/s. In time, and through the ,help and guidance of others

they will learn to control themselves. This is especially true if the play is supervised or at least watched by an adult. Through play the child will learn to accept defeat, and not feel jealous of another's victory. It removes the self-centeredness that is very .common in children

Social benefits

A child should be encouraged to play with others. Some children are shy and hesitate to participate in playing with others. Parents should try and contrive gatherings of friends whom the child knows and will feel comfortable with. He will thus overcome his shyness. Many social problems can be overcome by playing co-operatively with others. Parents today find it difficult to arrange for their children to play with those whom they know and trust. Stressful lifestyles, distances etc. all do their part in keeping children apart. However parents should try as much as possible to ensure that their children get occasional chances to play with others. Playing at home with .siblings or parents also has similar benefits

Children benefit differently from playing. For many it is a path to gaining confidence, recognizing one's abilities, and learning about others. Play uplifts the spirit of the child, making him cheerful and lively. It removes sorrow and anger, and is a good medicine .for an unhappy child

Types of play

A young child can play with almost anything. He does not need fancy and expensive toys. Simple inexpensive forms of play could include playing with old utensils, scraps of cloth and paper etc. Parents should be creative and look

for things the child could play with, rather than buy the latest in the stores. A child who keeps on getting new toys will soon become dissatisfied, and will not be content with anything. Many children these days are quick to lose interest in a toy. They should be .shown creative ways of playing

Forms of play differ according to age and ability of children. Younger children like to play with water, scrap materials, paper and glue, etc. They like to build and destroy. As they grow older they begin to play in groups. They like organized games and a chance to show their skills through play. Children may develop interest in a particular sport or hobby. Parents should encourage this if possible, and help their child develop .his talent

Parents and Play

The Holy Prophet (S) loved to play with his grandsons. He would seat them on his back, and pretend to be a camel. He told his companions that he was proud of the two riders on his back. He taught us that to play with children is not a waste of time. It is an .expression of love and respect

Parents should try and play with their children sometimes. Some parents believe it is childish and stooping to a low level. It is a great joy for children when their parents play with them. As the child grows, sports and board games could be a chance for the family to play together. This binds the family closer. But parents should remember that

this play is for the sake of the child, not for themselves. They should not seek to have everything according to what they think is right. A little flexibility is recommended. They should also let the child gain some small victories so that he does not despair whenever he plays with his parents. Playing with children is a good way of getting to know the child and his temperaments. It should not however be turned against him .with taunts and scoldings

Companions in play

Children are very influenced by the friends they play with. Parents should be careful that they do not pick up bad habits and behaviors through their play. If a change in behavior or speech is noticed, parents should at once ask about whom the child plays with. The child should be explained that such forms of behavior will not be tolerated. Some children pick up rude forms of speech, aggressive behavior and even a disrespectful attitude. It is thus necessary to be careful about the playmates of the child. If necessary, the child should be prevented from associating with inappropriate .playmates

Some Important Points

۱. Too much play is harmful for the child. He must not be allowed to spend all his time in play. Life must be a balance, and work is also essential. From childhood, it is necessary to learn that there is a time for everything. So a child must learn that he cannot run around and touch everything in someone else’s home. He cannot play when he has schoolwork or

chores to finish. He cannot spend his entire holidays just playing. He needs to do some .useful things at the same time

Children must not be forced to play. Some parents insist that their children play with .۲ the board game they have bought them. Or they demand that since the children are bored, they must play outside. If children do not wish to play it is a form of punishment .to be forced to do it. Left by themselves, most children will play occasionally

The environment for play must be child-friendly. If there are too many rules and .۳ restrictions, it limits the freedom and independence of a child. Some rules are necessary, but sometimes parents become extremely concerned about things around the house, or about the cleanliness and organization of their home. There must be a place for children where they can play freely, even if it means they make a mess. They should be taught to clean up after themselves, not stopped from ever making a .mess

There should be a variety in playing. Different forms of play such as sports, board .۴ games, puzzles, imaginative acting etc. all help to build a healthy and strong character. It is wrong to emphasize on only one form of play and neglect others. A balanced individual has had the chance of trying out and enjoying various forms of .recreations and the skills they build

Words of Wisdom

.Whoever has a child should be like a child with him .۱

(Holy Prophet (S

Lesson ۸: Outside Influences

point

Although many parents try

hard to bring up their children in the right manner, a variety of forces sometimes destroy their efforts. The influences of these outside forces often play havoc with the training given at home. This should not be under estimated and parents must be aware of their negative potential. Once the enemy is realized, it becomes easier to .control and decrease its impact

Human society today is stooping to lower and lower levels of morality. Today's children encounter a great deal of negative and immoral influences. To be able to face these regularly but remain morally and religiously intact, they need the help and guidance of wise parents. Children must be taught how avoid or minimize mental and emotional pollution. Such guidance will be vital for moral stability all through life, as .these influences will remain

Technological advances have made it possible for children to have various forms of evil and degrading entertainment. Television, computer, internet and C.D's are all part of many children's lives. Although there are advantages that can be derived from these sources, parents have to be vigilant to ensure that children are not drawn to the .violence and corruption lurking in them

Television

Much has been said and written about this invention which has become a necessary part of every home. There are some advantages to it. Children can learn form the television. There are some good programs and documentaries that broaden the .horizons of a child's life and teach him about the world around him

However television also has

its bad side. Many programs have contents not on par with Islamic values. Children constantly watching shows begin to think that love, beauty, glamour and fun are the aims of life. Wrong messages are absorbed and learnt by the child. These messages .are quite effective because they are passed through the medium of sight

Children are bombarded with images of people seemingly leading fun filled lives. Their behavior, clothing, lifestyles etc. are all totally opposed to Islam. The world, however, seems to admire such people and Muslim children begin to admire them too. They wish to emulate them, and follow their way of life. This type of subtle brain washing is .very dangerous and can greatly influence the mind of a child

Another disadvantage of television is the amount of violence it shows. It is a known fact that regular viewers of television become immune to violence. Scenes of death and gruesome violence create no emotion in them. Some viewers are even tempted to carry out what they watch. Human beings lose their gentleness and humanness when they watch a lot of violence. The result is scary. Scores of young television viewers have no concern over the killings and murders that have become a part of life .in many parts of the world

Often parents see television as a babysitter. Parents need to keep the children quiet as they do their own work. What they do not realize is that the children are coming under the influence of what they see. Their

minds and thinking become attuned to the pictures flashing on the screen. It is much better to have children beside the parent while they are working. A mother who is cooking should try and give her children something to play with from the kitchen utensils. According to their age she could involve them in the cooking and get them to help. Or the children could read or color etc. near where the mother is working. It is better to think out ways of keeping children busy while parents are working rather .than to turn on the television

Books

Books play a great role in enhancing the intelligence of the child. From a very young age, children should be read to, and given books that they can look at by themselves. Board books are available for the very young. A book is the best teacher for a child, a friend who is never far away in times of boredom and loneliness. Reading the correct type of books can influence the child towards what is good and right in life. Parents should introduce their children to a good library and encourage them to read in their .spare time

A great danger is when children begin reading the wrong type of books. Just as books can be a good influence, they can also be a destructive one. A bad book can spoil the mind of a child, filling it with poisonous ideas and views. Many books for children are filled with violence, fantasies, and romance. Comics

and other such books may be entertaining but have little or no benefit for the child. .Parents should know what their children are reading

It is not enough to encourage children to read and then leave them to choose whatever they wish. Most children will choose junk literature which has little benefit for the mind or for literary development. Children must be guided towards choosing good books. Not necessarily boring or didactic ones, but ones which have value in their stories and language. Many classics are interesting for children but they need to be told about them. Most libraries these days have information on good books for .various ages

Another good idea is to get some Islamic books for children to read. Islamic literature for children, both fiction and non-fiction, is being published at a fast rate these days. Many of these books are of a very high quality. Popular genres such as mystery books are now being written by Muslim authors with stories involving Muslim children and Muslim lifestyles. The illustrations and plots of the stories are fascinating for young children. Reading such books allows children a feel for Islamic culture, and enables .them to take pride in themselves as Muslims

Friends

Another great influence on the life of children is the friends they associate with. Many people stray from the straight path as a result of the negative influence of friends. The Qur’an tells us that on the Day of Judgement, people will regret the wrong friendships they had in the

:world. It says

On the day when the unjust will bite their hands (regretfully) saying, would that we had taken a way with the Messenger. Woe to us! Would that we had not been friends (with so and so. He led us away from the true guidance after it had come to us. (۲۵:۲۸

There is no doubt that the behavior of a friend can affect a child. He picks up mannerisms, ways of speech etc. from the friends he plays with and works with all day. Especially when children are at school, the hours spent with classmates often .have great influence

Parents should be aware of who their children are friends with. If they find out that a certain friend does not have the right type of character, and is having a negative .effect on their child, they should try and discourage the friendship

Although it is necessary for children to spend time with their friends, parents should discourage going out all the time with friends, especially as the children get older. Many children insist on going to the mall with friends, or going for outings in groups. . Such outings should be discouraged

Friendships with children who share the same values should be encouraged. Children need friends and it is wrong to tell them not to play with anyone. Parents must provide alternatives so children can enjoy happy times with friends who will not have a wrong .influence

By being aware of the influences that affect the child, parents can try

and combat them. They can minimize their effects by keeping the child away from them as much as possible. Although it is not possible to protect the child totally from all negative influences, nor is it wise to cocoon him completely, it is important that a .young child be protected as much as possible

As they become older they become more and more exposed to such influences. But then the child is mature enough to hold on to his own beliefs and values, and the .damage is much less

Wise Words

.The conduct of everyone will be according to the beliefs and principles of his friend .١

(Holy Prophet (S

Teach your children from our knowledge, what Allah will help them with, so that .٢ .those who have gone astray (the Marjaiah) will not affect them with their opinions

(Imam 'Ali (a

Lesson ٩: Sibling Rivalry

point

Whenever there are two or more children in a family, rivalry between them is inevitable. Jealousy is a very common trait in human beings. People look at the successes of others and react in one of two ways. Some wish to achieve the same and thus try to work for it, harboring no ill-feelings or grudge. Others however, wish to .despoil the good fortune they see

Their nature is such that they cannot bear to see the success of others, and hope for its destruction. This is the type of jealousy that is so strongly condemned in Islam. Says the Holy Prophet (S): Beware of jealousy, for jealousy eats good deeds the

.way fire eats wood

It is not abnormal for children to feel jealous of one another. The aim of parents should be to control it and keep it within appropriate limits. It cannot be totally eliminated. When confronted with the achievement of a sibling, many children perceive it as a threat. They are afraid of losing their status. Success of a sibling could result in unfavorable comparisons, greater expectations and lower respect for themselves, both at home and outside. Although this could be entirely imaginary and .blown out of proportion, it is necessary to understand why children react as they do

Most sibling rivalry stems from the perceived loss of parental love and respect. Children wish to have the greatest share of their parents love and attention. When siblings take it away from them, even temporarily, it becomes greatly upsetting. Only time and maturity helps the child understand that this loss is only imagined and not .real

An important point to consider is that it is sometimes possible for a parent to love one child more than another. It could be because of certain qualities the child possesses. The parent has to be very careful, however, not to display this inclination. It could result in greater jealousy. In the story of Prophet Yusuf (a), the Holy Qur’an gives us an example of sibling rivalry. T

he brothers of Prophet Yusuf (a) thought their father loved him more than he loved them. Some commentators of the Qur’an mention that Prophet Ya’qub had

a special affection for Yusuf, and perhaps gave him more attention. That could have been because he was one of the youngest sons, or because his mother had passed away. Perhaps Prophet Ya'qub foresaw the great future of Prophet Yusuf. Whatever the reason, the brothers of Yusuf felt threatened and resorted to throwing him in the .well

The Holy Prophet (S) always emphasized that children should be treated equally. The sixth Imam (a) is reported to have said that he felt more inclined towards some of his .children, but he purposely displayed more affection to the others

Causes of Jealousy

Position in danger

When a new baby is born in the family, the child who was the youngest (or the only one) feels threatened. He is accustomed to being the center of attention and now has to contend with someone who takes away the parent's love and attention. This is especially true of younger children who cannot understand that the parents have enough love for all their children. The demands of a new-born are often misunderstood. In such a situation the feeling of sibling rivalry can be reduced .through the following ways

a) Talk to the child before the baby arrives. Prepare him and involve him in the preparations for the new arrival. It could become a very exciting event if handled properly. The child will begin to feel attached to the baby before it comes, and will .await the arrival anxiously

b) When the baby arrives, involve the child as much as possible. He could carry out

minor chores according to his age, such as bringing diapers, holding the towel, etc. The feeling of being a big brother or sister creates a sense of importance and makes the loss of position more bearable. The child is now evolving towards a higher status .and must be taught to appreciate that

c) Talk to the child constantly. Discuss the baby with the sibling/s. Talk about his waking up at night, his crying, his babyish gestures etc. Keeping communication open .with the children assures them of the love of the parents

Comparing

All human beings (and children) have different abilities and personalities. A variety of characters and traits in a family make the home a lively and interesting place. Many parents, however, make the mistake of constantly comparing children with one another. Although the intent is to try and make one child imitate the good behavior of .another, the result is often resentment and jealousy

Comparison lowers the self-esteem of children, especially when one child is always at a disadvantage. Sometimes children are given labels. So one may be "lazy", another "smart", another "slow" etc. Such labels, especially if given constantly, eventually become accepted and believed. A "slow" child comes to believe that he is slow and .may never wholly overcome it

At times parents compare their children to those of other families. It is all right to sometimes mention the good qualities of another child, but it must be done gently and carefully. It is wrong to praise other children and lower one's

.own, especially if this is done constantly

Giving more attention to one child

Sometimes a child needs more attention than others. This could be true of small babies, or if a child is sick and/or has a particular problem. When a parent gives continuous attention to one child, it is natural that the others feel resentful and jealous. The first thing to do is ascertain that the child receiving more attention .actually needs it. Some children just demand more

If it is a genuine need, it must be explained to the other children. Just discussing it with them, and talking about why more attention is given to the sibling may help in preventing anger and jealousy. It is also necessary to find some time to spend alone with each child. This is hard to do when parents are very busy, but an effort must be made. A small amount of time spent alone with one child could make a great .difference in bolstering his confidence and security

Finding faults in the presence of other siblings

Parents who often put down and scold one child in front of another, are increasing sibling rivalry. No child likes to feel humiliated in front of his siblings. The harsh words spoken by the parent, even if deserved, could be used by siblings to tease the child. Although it is natural to sometimes get angry with one child in front of the others, a serious reprimand should be given in private. It is also important not to take sides in quarrels between siblings. A hasty reaction made in anger could

.be an unfair. It is best to listen to both sides and then deal with it

Gender differences

Some parents prefer their sons over their daughters. This is a totally unfounded and un-Islamic bias. To favor boys and give them special treatment is unfair. It builds great resentment among siblings. Some parents give a lot of freedom to their boys, and have too many restrictions for their daughters. Although it is necessary to protect the girls, it is not wise to allow boys too much freedom. In today's society both need to .be protected and guided

Hints for reducing Sibling Rivalry

Deal with Justice. Justice does not mean the same treatment for everyone. It has .١ been defined by as placing a thing in its place. Differences in treatment to children will exist because of age differences. A five-year old and a teenager will not have the same bedtime. Nor will both of them receive the same type of clothing or toys. Justice means to treat each child with appropriate respect and consideration. When differences are present, explain to the child the reasons and assure them that they .too will receive the same treatment when appropriate

If a child displays jealousy toward another sibling, Parents should not become .٢ shocked and try to suppress it. No parent can force a child to love his sibling, or threaten him if he shows signs of jealousy. If that is done, the child may learn only that he should not display his jealousy in front of the parent. He may carry the feeling

with him for a long time. Today there are many adults who hold grudges against their siblings. To avoid that, parents should try and deal with it in the initial stages. Patience and understanding are required, especially for the very young who sometimes show .even violent signs of jealousy

Although conflict and constant bickering is very common in children, most people grow out of it. Many siblings grow up to be very close to each other even if they may be physically miles apart. Sibling rivalry is a source of great concern to many parents, and many wonder in frustration if their children will ever get along with one another. However this can be overcome with some wisdom and tact and a lot of patience. Eventually the bond between siblings becomes, for most people, stronger than many .other bonds

Wise Words

.Treat your children equally when giving them presents .۱

(Holy Prophet (S

Lesson ۱۰: Mistakes Parents often make

point

Many parents have frustrated and angry relationships with their children. Even very young children sometimes become a source of annoyance with their constant demands, whining, and disobedience. Family life is supposed to be joyous and fulfilling but reality is often very different in many cases. However, a lot of the heartache and .pain of child rearing is quite unnecessary

If parents would take a little time and effort to improve their ways, realize their mistakes, and devise new strategies and plans, the dividends would be great. A small change in attitude and/or behavior would make life much happier for both parent

.and child

.Below are some common mistakes that parents often make

Making children dependent .۱

Some parents believe that to love children means to do their work. They take excessive pity on the child and feel that as a parent it is their duty to do things for him. So at six years old a child is still be dressed by the parents. He is considered too young to tie his own shoes, or comb his hair. Such constant fussing over the child does not instill confidence and independence in the child. A ten year old who never cleans his room, and lets mum or dad do it, will learn to always depend on others. This may also .foster laziness, sloppiness and a lack of initiative

A wise parent knows that the best way to help a child is not do things for him, but to show him how to do them. Learning the skills of carrying out personal and household chores are an achievement often appreciated during the early years. A child who is not taught to do them when young, will be very unwilling to do them when older. Parents should help their children learn to do their own work, using the physical and .mental powers the Almighty has blessed them with

Quarreling in front of the children .۲

It is natural for couples to have occasional arguments, sometimes even heated and bitter ones. However it is very damaging to carry these out in front of children. Children do not understand that this is not a cause of worry, and may

.begin to imagine the worst

To them it could be a sign that the parents do not love each other, that they may even .divorce and destroy his world

This causes depression and loss of security among children. Worse, it could have damaging effects as the child grows. He could look upon the conflicting relationship of his parents as a normal relationship for married couples and this could have a major .effect on his own relationships

Some parents even try to make the children take sides. If a wife feels her husband is treating her unfairly, she may talk to the children and make them see her side. She would like to turn them against the husband, at least to a certain degree. What she fails to realize is that the husband is a father to her children. They would like to .respect and love him

By poisoning them against him she is doing them a great injustice. She could be damaging a relationship that has the potential to bring the child great good. This also applies to those who try to turn children against their grandparents, or other relatives. Because of a conflict with in-laws, children are told of how unfair and oppressive the .family is

To deprive the children of love and respect for their extended family is also a great wrong. Parents should not let their own quarrels keep their children away from .enjoying the special love of grandparents and other relatives

The best thing parents can do

to a child is present a loving and harmonious relationship among themselves. It boosts the child both mentally and emotionally and helps him form loving relationships in his own life. It is true that arguments cannot always be dismissed. But they must be done in private, away from the child who cannot understand or bear fighting among .his parents

Expecting too much of children .۳

Some parents would like their children to behave totally like adults. They don't want them to run around, to play, to talk loudly, even to touch things around the house. What they should understand is that all these activities are part of growing up. To be a healthy adult, children need to have passed through various stages, each of which is a .building block in his character

In Hadith al-Mufazzal, our sixth Imam describes the wisdom behind the childish :behavior which some adults dislike. He says

If a child had been born with mature intellect, he would have been astounded on opening his eyes and seeing such varied assortment, different kinds of forms and distinctive images of unity and disunity. For a long time he would not understand where he had come from and where he has arrived, and whether all that he was .seeing was in a state of dreams or waking

If he had been born with mature intellect he would have felt disgusted and degraded .on finding himself being carried about in the lap, fed with milk, wrapped in bandages

There would not have been, if they had been born with

mature intellect, that sweetness, nor that consideration for infants in the minds of the adults which comes from fondling the untutored children. Their artlessness creates a particular attraction. As such he is born into the world without an understanding for anything, quite unaware of the world and what lies therein. He views all these things with his undeveloped brain and inadequate understanding, and so does not feel .perplexed

His intellect and understanding develop by degrees, slowly from time to time, little by little. This introduces him gradually to the things around him and accustoms his brain .accordingly

The child lives in a world quite different from that of the parent. Parents sometimes view the life of the child from an adult perspective, and forget that to the child his little .world is very important

Although they must be kept away from harmful and dangerous things, a child should be allowed to explore things that arouse his curiosity. Let him meddle with things that he is interested in, if the consequences are not very destructive. The house should not .be a prison for him, with constant orders to sit down and be quiet

Allow the child to have a little independence, especially in things that are not greatly significant. The small mistakes that he may make will teach him to do different next time. There is a difference between issues of grave importance that cannot be compromised, and issues in which some flexibility can be allowed. Life should not be so serious that every

.small thing should be treated like a major issue

Some parents also make the mistake of expecting too many achievements from their children. A parent should know his child, and his strengths and weaknesses. If a child is not too bright, it is enough to encourage him to work hard and achieve according to his potential. To expect that he must bring perfect marks, and then show disappointment when he cannot, hurts the child and lowers his self-esteem. This is the same for all expectations the parents has from the child. It must be proportionate .to the age and ability of the child

Negativity .۴

Life is miserable for those children who have to deal with parents who are constantly negative. Such parents do not forget mistakes, harp on small issues, and are always predicting the worst. "You are not studying hard, you are bound to fail", Your room is such a mess, I wonder how sloppy your house will be when you grow up", "Stop troubling your younger sister, you have no love for her at all" are examples of .negative and perhaps destructive comments

A parent may sometimes say such things in anger, but it is the constant repetition of negative comments that affect a child greatly. A happy home is one in which children know that they will be disciplined when necessary, but do not have to fear a sharp .tongue or harsh words

Some parents also have a very negative attitude on life. They complain of their work, and the people

they work with. They blame the world for their troubles and are quick to talk negatively about others. All this is undoubtedly going to have an effect on the child. A child who has heard a lot about how unfair and difficult life is may form a dim view of life in this world. His enthusiasm for life decreases. A great deal of a child's joy and zest for living stems from what his parents think and say about life. It is always .necessary to avoid being too negative when talking in front of children

Being two–faced .۵

Many parents do not realize how observant and absorbing a child is. They will talk in front of him forgetting that he is present, almost as though he is a piece of furniture - deaf and dumb. But a child listens and absorbs, often ponders over and sometimes repeats, what he hears. Thus when a parent says something about a particular thing or person, and then says something different to someone else, the child is introduced .to being two-faced

A parent may rant against someone, and say he dislikes him immensely. Yet when he meets the same person, he is very nice to him and shows no sign of his anger. Although to a certain degree this may be necessary, for we cannot show our disagreements openly, it is not necessary to indulge in hypocritical behavior. A .hypocrite is one who will be very sweet to the face, but will stab from the back

Imam Muhammad

al-Baqir (a) says: The worst of the servants (of Allah) is one who has two faces and two tongues. He praises his brother-in-faith when he is present, and eats him when .he is absent

A child should not be exposed to such behavior. He believes that his parent is always .right, and to see such two faced behavior is a disillusionment and a wrong message

Humiliating a child in front of others .۶

A child has his own personality and, just like an adult, wants that others should love and respect him. It is thus very difficult for him when he is scolded and derogated in public. Some parents announce to others when the children are present, how well behaved one child is and how naughty the other. Or, if a mistake is made, he is scolded even when there are other people around. A slight reprimand may not matter too much, but a serious one should be done in private. Respect the child's personality, .and you will teach him to respect others

Parents are human beings and are bound to make mistakes. The aim is not to refrain from ever making mistakes, but to learn from them and gradually decrease them. Parents have been making the same mistakes over the years, and it is time to learn and change. A slight change in attitude and methods of parenting will create vastly improved relationships between parents and children. This in turn produces stronger .families, a vital commodity in the struggle to create a progressive Ummah

Du'a for Virtuous Children

No efforts can succeed

without the help of the Almighty. Recite the following du’a seven times after every daily prayer for a virtuous progeny. The du’a is the prayer of Prophet Zakariyyah (a) .and is found in Surah Ale Imran n.۳, verse ۳۷ of the Holy Qur’an

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent the Merciful

O Allah, bless Muhammad and his family

.My Lord! Grant me, from Yourself, a good (virtuous) offspring

.Surely, You are the Hearer of prayer

.O Allah, bless Muhammad and his family

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism- places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems,- web kiosks

Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

Holding virtual teacher-training courses-

Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and- English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

Also producing four markets named "Ghaemiyeh Book Market" with Android, IOS,- WINDOWS PHONE and WINDOWS editions

:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

:Address of the central office
Isfahan, Abdorazaq St, Haj Mohammad JafarAbadei Alley, Shahid Mohammad HasanTavakkoly Alley, Number plate ۱۲۹, first floor
Website: www.ghbook.ir
Email: Info@ghbook.ir
Central office Tel: ۰۳۱۳۴۴۹۰۱۲۵
۰۲۱ ـ Tehran Tel: ۸۸۳۱۸۷۲۲
Commerce and sale: ۰۹۱۳۲۰۰۰۱۰۹
Users' affairs: ۰۹۱۳۲۰۰۰۱۰۹

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